

## FAQS SUMMER COURSE PROGRAMME 2024

### **1. When does the Summer Course Programme 2024 commence and conclude?**

The summer course programme is scheduled to commence on Monday, 1 July 2024, and all courses will be completed by 5 pm on Friday, 16 August 2024.

### **2. What is the principal objective of the Summer Course Programme?**

The principal objective is to advance the teaching, learning, and/or management skills of teachers to bring about improved learning outcomes for pupils.

### **3. What criteria must be met for the approval of summer courses by the Department of Education?**

The criteria include alignment with DE policy and contemporary research, clear learning outcomes, reflection of key principles of the Primary Curriculum, consideration of specific class levels and individual learning needs, among others.

### **4. What are the new categories of courses for 2024?**

The new categories include:

1. Language upskilling (including French / German / Spanish and others) in preparation for the introduction of Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) as part of the Primary Curriculum Framework for stages 3 and 4 of primary school (NCCA, 2023; Circular Letter 0017/2023)
2. Wellbeing which focuses on the implementation of the Department of Education (2022) Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying Ireland's Whole Education Approach to preventing and addressing bullying in schools.

Providers can apply for these, and other categories listed in the Handbook.

### **5. What is the approval cycle for summer courses for primary school teachers?**

The approval cycle for summer courses for primary school teachers began in 2023 and spans a three- year period. Year 2024 marks the second year of the cycle.

### **6. How are summer courses evaluated?**

Courses are evaluated based on criteria such as course content, participant learning experience, course management, and reflection of national priorities. Inspections may be unannounced for face-to-face courses, and online courses may be evaluated over the duration of the course.

### **7. When is the deadline for submitting the application form to run a course in the Summer Programme 2024?**

The electronic copy (in pdf format) of the online application form must be received by Drumcondra Education Centre by 4 pm on Friday, 1 March 2024. Email submissions should be sent to [summercourses@ecdumcondra.ie](mailto:summercourses@ecdumcondra.ie).

### **8. How should I submit my summer course application?**

Summer course applications must be submitted in .pdf format, following the naming convention summercoursetitle.pdf (e.g., PEintheprimaryclass.pdf). The applications must be received by Drumcondra Education Centre by 4 pm on March 1, 2024 via email to [summercourses@ecdumcondra.ie](mailto:summercourses@ecdumcondra.ie)

**9. Is there a limit on the length of the course title?**

Yes, the course title should not exceed 70 characters, including spaces.

**10. What are the different formats for summer courses in 2024?**

Providers may offer Face-to-Face, Blended Learning, Online Learning Courses (Asynchronous), and Online Learning Courses (Synchronous - Pilot Courses). Detailed information for each format is available in the Handbook.

**11. How long does a Face-to-Face course run, and what are the specifics?**

A 20-hour Face-to-Face course will run for five consecutive days, with a minimum of 4 hours per day. Refer to page 15 of the Handbook for further details.

**12. What are the details available regarding the Blended Learning Course format?**

A 20-hour Blended Learning course includes onsite learning over two days (eight hours) and the remaining 12 hours through 4-hour online asynchronous/synchronous learning. More information is available on pages 15-16 of the Handbook.

**13. Are there specific requirements for online course providers in 2024?**

Yes, online providers must submit an updated quality assurance manual in 2024. The manual should outline commitments to avoid copyright breaches and plagiarism. Evidence of permission to use third-party materials should also be provided.

**14. What happens if a provider fails to provide the required assurances for online courses?**

Failure to provide assurances will result in the non-approval of courses for the Summer Programme 2024.

**15. What are the key dates for providers in 2024?**

Application forms and the Handbook for Providers are available from Drumcondra Education Centre. Ensure your summer course application is submitted by March 1, 2024. The summer course program begins on July 1, 2024, and concludes by 5 pm on August 16, 2024. Notify Drumcondra Education Centre of any course cancellations by June 21, 2024.

**16. How should providers handle cancellation of summer courses?**

Providers must communicate to provide formal notice of at least one week in advance and report any course cancellations to Drumcondra Education Centre no later than June 21, 2024. More information is available on page 12 of the Handbook.

**17. Can participants undertake multiple courses simultaneously?**

No, participants can only complete courses consecutively, not concurrently. Teachers can undertake one course at a time. A record of participant attendance, including logs of engagement at asynchronous sessions, must be available for inspection.

**18. What are the participant limits for the different course formats?**

For face-to-face and blended learning, a maximum of 25 participants will be placed with one tutor. For online courses, the maximum is 75 participants with a dedicated e-tutor for each iteration.

**19. Can course providers apply to run consecutive iterations of the course?**

Yes, providers can apply to run consecutive iterations of online and face-to-face courses.

**20. What documents should be submitted with the application for online and blended courses?**

Providers of online and blended courses must submit a single electronic copy of the Quality Assurance Manual along with their application to [summercourses@ecdumcondra.ie](mailto:summercourses@ecdumcondra.ie).

**21. How long will courses approved in 2023 remain valid?**

Courses approved in 2023 will remain valid for a total of three years, extending until 2025, encompassing the period from 2023 to 2025.

**22. What should providers do for courses with stipulations from the Inspectorate in the previous year?** Providers must submit the inspection report electronically for courses monitored by the Inspectorate in the previous year along with their applications.

**23. Are there any specific conditions for courses with issues related to plagiarism and/or copyright?** Yes, courses where issues of plagiarism and/or copyright were identified must undergo the approval process again in the year 2024.

**24. Can courses that had their approval withdrawn in a previous year be resubmitted for approval in the current cycle?**

Yes, courses that faced approval withdrawal in a previous year, either due to stipulations or issues of plagiarism/copyright, can be re-submitted for approval in the year 2024.

**25. What should providers do if an evaluation report recommends the withdrawal of approval for a course offered in 2023?**

Providers must submit a new application form in 2024, addressing the stipulations set out in the report.

**26. What should providers do if they want to appeal?**

Providers can submit a fully completed appeal within the specified timeframe. Please refer the timelines from the Summer Courses Handbook 2024 provided on <http://www.ecdrumcondra.ie>

**27. What measures should providers take in case of unforeseen circumstances during the course?**

Providers should ensure sufficient staff availability and have a replacement presenter/tutor/e-tutor ready for unforeseen circumstances, notifying DEC at [summercourses@ecdrumcondra.ie](mailto:summercourses@ecdrumcondra.ie).

**28. When is the deadline for confirming that a course has sufficient registered teachers to proceed?** Providers must confirm by 4.00 p.m. on 21 June 2024 that they have sufficient numbers registered and their advertised courses are going ahead.

Providers must communicate a minimum of one week's advance notice of all cancelled summer courses to [summercourses@ecdrumcondra.ie](mailto:summercourses@ecdrumcondra.ie) by 21 June 2024.

**29. When should the completed summer course roll-book be returned to DEC for face-to-face courses?** The completed summer course roll-book should be returned to DEC at the end of the summer course, no later than Friday, 30 August 2024.

**30. How long should providers retain participant evaluation forms for face-to-face courses?**

Providers should retain all participant evaluation forms for a period of one year for the purpose of a DE review.

**31. What statistical information is required from all providers by 30 August 2024?**

All providers must submit required statistical information for the Department of Education, including composite evaluation information, details of participants, completion rates, etc., using the Statistical Returns 2024 link on <http://www.ecdrumcondra.ie>.

**32. How can I contact Drumcondra Education Centre (DEC) regarding the summer course programme?** All communication related to the summer course programme should be directed to the email address: [summercourses@ecdrumcondra.ie](mailto:summercourses@ecdrumcondra.ie).